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painters and myrtle flowers, the Italy of palaces and orange-groves is ours—why not forget the rest? Ah! my poor sketch spoils the lovely Nemi, it is too dead and gloomy—I must try again; and that deep blue misty effect of mid-distance, do tell me how to get it Mr. Brocklebanke."

I gave her the best and shortest directions that I was able, but she shrugged her shoulders with a pretty coquettish *mon* of despair.

"I cannot remember technicalities, I can only learn by the aid of eyes; will you give me a few lessons whilst I stay here?"

"I shall only be too proud to do so," I said, bowing.

"Very well, then, I shall be glad of your instructions, for I have much neglected my paintings lately (in England one can do nothing), so come, if you please, to-morrow evening, at six o'clock; and, meantime, let us arrange about my pictures. I must have several views from my windows here; and I discovered a lovely little bit of scenery yesterday, which I am sure will enrapture you. But now, would you mind walking around the palace and fixing your stations? You will find me here on your return, and you must report all your plans."

She then rang for a servant to act as my guide, waved her hand with a little imperious nod, as much as to say, "Now go, and mind what you are about;" and curled herself up on a couch, making a beautiful picture as she lay there with her shining gold-brown hair flung so wantonly over the pale blue velvet pillow.

Yes! she was unmistakably lovely, and her loveliness was of that piquant and varying kind that most bewitches. Now her dark voluptuous eyes are suffused with tears of momentary sadness—now they sparkle and glow in an ecstasy of enthusiasm; for one instant a shadow of thought spreads over her face, in the next to be melted by a wild merry laugh. There was not a feature that did not tempt you to look and to look again. The soft dewy eyes—eyes that changed in their expression at every impulse of thought—the dark radiant complexion, the delicately-formed nose and smiling imperious, rose-red lips—Lady Milroy, I shall be a miserable man till I have painted your portrait!

Her figure, too, was of that full and rounded type which is far more enchanting than the slenderness of girlhood; every line, every movement was full of grace and perfect self-possession; and around all, around looks words and actions, played at times a somewhat of coquetry that would have bewitched Zeno.

CHAPTER IX.

I now spent a part of each day at The Palazzo di Castiglione, and two or three times a week I gave Lady Milroy a water-color lesson, in her morning room. Those were delightful hours. She had a wonderful gift in conversation, and threw over every topic such a hue of playful vivacity, that it made your pulses beat more freely and gladly to hear her. Listening to her sweet, Italian words and looking upon her fair face made you feel as if earth were lovely and life divine. Then would come the low carolling laugh and the vain, coquettish smile, to break the spell and warn you that she was a true woman—nothing more.

Well, I scorned temptation—why should I not? Was I not a poor artist, without fame or rank or fascinations?—was I not betrothed to my gentle Alice, and did I not love her with all the depth and faithfulness of my sturdy English heart? Yes! I felt that I was secure, and was proud in my very humility. Yet at times, when Lady Milroy would lay her small, white hand upon my arm, and raise her tender, passionate eyes to mine, saying those kind things which a rich and titled woman of thirty can say with impunity to an ambitious artist of twenty-four—at such times I confess that the blood rushed to my brow and my heart beat quickly. Then the thought would come—am I right in being here?

But her very friendliness and kindness gave me

a feeling of security; besides, honor, love, duty, rank—pshaw! what temptation could break such barriers? And, on the other hand, was I not right in accepting the favor and friendship of so valuable a friend?

One day as I was giving her a lesson, our conversation turned to picture-galleries and picture-dealers in England.

"Bye-the-bye," she asked, abruptly, "What became of that picture which people made such a fuss about in the Academy Exhibition last summer? It was a terrible thing, but very clever, and was an impersonation of one of Byron's characters; you must know all about it."

"I suppose I must," I answered with a smile; "I painted it."

"Did it sell?"

"Yes to Mr. Ashly Berners. And did you see it, Lady Milroy?"

She continued painting, and said, carelessly, "I believe I did; but one forgets such things, and it's not that kind of picture that takes my fancy. Please, what color must I put in for this cloud Mr. Brocklebanke? Ah, what were we talking of."

"My picture of 'Lara.' You were remarking that it was not the kind of subject to take your fancy—"

She shrugged her shoulders and knit her brows.

"No; I like beautiful, good, bright-colored things; but that dismal one seemed to bring you luck. I heard a curious story about some man shaking his fist at that very same horrible picture of yours in the exhibition-room. Was it true?"

"Perfectly."

"And I also heard he called upon you, desiring to hear who had sat for the portrait. Was that true, also, Mr. Brocklebanke?"

"Quite true, Lady Milroy."

"And stay—I heard a great deal more. Did not the sitter, and also the man who sought after him, disappear? and did not some one deliver to you a letter to give one of them?"

I started to my feet.

"Who could have told you? I do not remember speaking of the subject to any living being."

"From whom I had the intelligence I really cannot remember; but," she continued looking at me with a bright little smile and blush, "when one hears so many gossipries and slanders, who can remember from whence they come? And now Mr. Brocklebanke, be good-natured, and gratify my curiosity. Did you or did you not, receive such a mission?"

"I did—a sealed letter. Is it not delightfully mysterious?"

"Have you never found the person to whom you were directed to give it?"

"Never; I hope to do so, however, some day." She turned to me quickly: "you know where he is then?"

"Indeed, I do not, Lady Milroy, any more than I know why you are putting cobalt in your foliage instead of olive-green."

"I am tired, and it is too warm to work this evening; that is why, Mr. Brocklebanke. And don't scold, please; but just wash it out, and put all to rights. That's very nice, go on, and I will watch you."

So saying, she threw herself back in her chair wearily, and urged me by entreaties and commands to proceed with her work.

"You have made me break rules, Lady Milroy," I said, as I went on; "I make it a custom never to assist my pupils."

"But I must be assisted. Oh! if I could but paint as you do, Mr. Brocklebanke, I would give half my wealth; it must be a glorious thing to be an artist!"

"To hear you say so makes me hold my art nobler still," I said, with an effort; "but to your own life, Lady Milroy, it could add but few attractions. It is only the poor, the friendless, and the unloved, who want something to worship and cherish, and follow through all toils and privations and disappointments. Your life is beauti-

ful and complete; you have taste, generosity, beauty, wealth. Without such presiding influences as these, the artist's life would be barren indeed."

She rose and walked to and fro in the room, whilst her eyes lit and her cheeks glowed.

"But what is all this to the power of genius and the glory of ambition? A fool may scatter gold amongst descendants of kings—no, no, Mr. Brocklebanke, do not talk to me of wealth, and generosity, and patronage; what is that to the consciousness of talent and the pleasure of reputation? Oh! it is good to be admired and sought after."

How beautiful she looked, then! her eyes wild with excitement, her burnished hair flung off the white temples, and her whole frame thrilling with passionate enthusiasm of her nature. Then, after a few moments, the long eyelashes drooped, the bosom seemed to heave, the white hands unclasped, and fell listlessly by her side.

She approached the easel, and touching my arm, said, somewhat sadly:

"If I cannot possess your gift, Mr. Brocklebanke, at least teach me to appreciate it. But you shall paint no more to-day, you look pale and overworn already."

Again she laid her hand upon my arm, with that half imperious, half tender touch. Why did I start and turn pale and hesitate? Arthur Brocklebanke, be proud!

(To be Continued.)

LITERARY CURIOSITIES.

The quaint Bulwer (not the modern one) in his *Anthropometamorphosis* (a pretty long word) gives three rules for feasting, "*Stridor gentium altum silentium—rumor gentium*," which some wag translated "work for the jaws—a silent pause—frequent ha-has."

It appears the Romans never appreciated the dish or turtle soup. Juvenal says, "*Nemo, inter curas et seria, duxit habendum qualis, in oceanum tutius, estudo nataret*," which paraphrased would read thus: "None have yet found it worth serious thought, how large a turtle may, at sea, be caught." A knight describes tortoises "as to suffice two men with ease to sit, and so strong, as to carry them;" but he adds, "sailors affect to eat them, but are better meat for hogs in my opinion."

Poggio tell us that Zisca, the reformer of Bohemia, had so savory a taste that he only asked for his share of plunder what he was pleased to call "the cobwebs, which hung from the roofs of farmer's houses," meaning the hams, gammons, sausages, and pigs cheeks, for which Bohemia was celebrated.

Cardinal Francis Maria de Brancaccio, in the year 1666, wrote a treatise to prove that the drinking of chocolate could not be said to occasion the breaking a fast.

Quin, the wit and epicure, dined one day with a celebrated duchess of the reign of Queen Ann. To the surprise of Quin she helped herself to the leanest part of a haunch. "What! and does your grace eat no fat?" "Not of venison, sir." "Never, my Lady Duchess?" "Never, I assure you." Quin, not being able to restrain his genuine sentiments, said, "By G— I love to dine with such fools!"

Pliny accounts for the invention of sculpture thus: Dibutades, the fair daughter of a celebrated potter of Sicyon, contrived a private meeting with her lover. After a prolonged stay the youth fell fast asleep; the nymph, however, whose imagination was more alert, observed that by the light of a lamp her lovers profile was strongly marked on the wall, picked up a piece of charcoal and traced the outline with such success, that her father, determined, if possible, to preserve the effect. With this view he formed a kind of clay model from it, which first essay had the honor to be preserved in the public repository of Corinth until the day of its destruction by Mummius Achairus.